PLEASE DO NOTE:

I didn't make this and all ownership, credit, and rights go to piratebox.cc

PirateBox FAQ

PirateBox is a **DIY anonymous offline file-sharing and communications system** built with free software and inexpensive off-the-shelf hardware. **Learn more below** by reading our **FAQs** or **start building one now**.

Troubleshooting

Please note: For technical FAQs and general troubleshooting, visit the **PirateBox Troubleshooting page** and the **PirateBox Forum**.

What is the PirateBox?

PirateBox creates offline wireless networks designed for **anonymous file sharing, chatting, message boarding, and media streaming**. You can think of it as your very own **portable offline Internet in a box**! PirateBox project is following a view simple goals.

How does it work?

When users join the **PirateBox** wireless network and open a web browser, they are automatically redirected to the **PirateBox** welcome page. Users can anonymously chat, post images or comments on the bulletin board, watch or listen to streaming media, or upload and download files inside their web browser.

Where can I buy a PirateBox?

There are some things that money can't buy, and **PirateBox** is one of them! However, you can **build one yourself** by following our **easy DIY instructions (OpenWrt instructions) OR (Raspberry Pi instructions)** .

Is it hard to build my own PirateBox?

With the release of **PirateBox 1.0**, building your own **PirateBox** has never been easier!

Our current **target hardware** is the **TP-Link TL-MR3020** and **TP-Link TL-MR3040** wireless routers and the **Raspberry Pi single board computer**. You should be able to pick up each of these devices for around **US$35**. Visit the **PirateBox OpenWrt DIY page** and the **Raspberry Pi page** for **detailed instructions** and more info.

There is also now a **PirateBox Android app** which can be easily installed on **rooted** Android phones.

PirateBox will also run on most wireless routers that have USB storage and that are capable of running **OpenWrt**. It is even possible to install **PirateBox** directly on a **Laptop running Linux**. The build process is more advanced than using our target hardware above and your mileage may vary.

Is it safe?

PirateBox is designed to be private and secure. No logins are required and no user data is logged. Users remain anonymous – the system is purposely not connected to the Internet in order to subvert tracking and preserve user privacy.

What's new with PirateBox Version 1.0?

PirateBox 1.0 brings several new features including: **Responsive web design** for ease of use with phones and tablets; **UPnP Media Server** for local streaming of movies and songs; **Image and Message Board** for 4chan-like functionality; **Chat room** for anonymous communications; **Browser-based file sharing** system! You can **learn more about PirateBox Version 1.0 here**.

Can I modify my PirateBox?

Absolutely! **PirateBox** is free (as in freedom) because it is registered under the **GNU GPLv3**. This license grants you the right to freely copy, distribute, and transform creative works according to the principles of **copyleft**. You can learn more about modding your **PirateBox** by visiting the **mods page** and the **PirateBox Forum**.

Where can I read more about the PirateBox?

Visit the **PirateBox Press page** for a listing of and links to more than 175 stories about **PirateBox**.

Where can I find more photos of the PirateBox?

Check out the **PirateBox Gallery**.

Where can I find more videos of the PirateBox?

Check out **these PirateBox Videos**.

Why did you build the PirateBox?

PirateBox solves a technical/social problem by providing people in the same physical space with an easy way to anonymously communicate and exchange files. This obviously has larger cultural and political implications and thus the PirateBox also serves as an artistic provocation. See this **ars technica article** and this **New Scientist article** for more info.

Why is it called the PirateBox?

PirateBox is inspired by the free culture and pirate radio movements. The name is a playful remixing of the title of the world's most resilient BitTorrent site, The Pirate Bay.

Does the PirateBox promote stealing?

No. The PirateBox is designed to facilitate communication and sharing between friends and local community members.

What are some ways the PirateBox has been used?

Along with offline file sharing, media streaming, and community building, the **PirateBox** has been used by **musicians** to share their music at festivals and gigs, by **teachers** to distribute and collect digital materials from students, by **emergency response workers** and volunteers to publish local first aid information and community updates. It has also been used by **librarians** and **writers** to collect, store, and distribute electronic texts, by **conference organizers** to distribute conference materials and to provide local wireless commenting during presentations. **PirateBox** has also been used by **coworkers** collaborating on projects, and by **CryptoParty workshop leaders** to securely share cryptographic keys.

Does the PirateBox do wireless mesh networking?

The holy grail of offline networking is wireless mesh and we've been experimenting with it for the **PirateBox**. We have successfully deployed and connected small arrays of PirateBoxes using the **B.A.T.M.A.N.** protocol and synchronized them with **Forban**. This is still an experimental feature at this point though we are making good progress. We'll be pushing out an alpha version of this feature in our upcoming release.

Who helps build the PirateBox?

PirateBox was created by **David Darts** and the lead developer is **Matthias Strubel**. Aaron Williamson from the Software Freedom Law Center provided advice on the project and Christiane Ruetten originally ported PirateBox to OpenWrt. The project is actively supported by developers and testers all over the world.

Do you know of any other projects similar to PirateBox?

Yes, check out **Aram Bartholl's** fantastic **Dead Drops**. There are also several forks of the project, including Jason Griffey's **LibraryBox** (actually nearly 1:1 and working togehter)., the **Bibliobox** and the **CoWBox** (CoWorking Box). A new C.H.I.P based PirateBox fork is **AnyfestoCHIP** (**Project-website**). In addition, there are several projects which focus education, creating an offline network, but are not based on Piratebox:

- **Aptus**
- **ED4Free** (French only)

Where can I discuss the PirateBox?

Visit the **PirateBox Forum** to discuss the **PirateBox**, share your builds, and receive support. And join us at the annual **PirateBox Camp** which brings together the PirateBox community of developers, contributors and users for a free (as in beer *and* freedom) weekend of hacking, learning and networking.

How can I help the PirateBox?

- Test the **development builds** and report back in the **development forum**
- Checkout the issue list on **github**
- Help out in the **PirateBox Forum** and **IRC**
- Update documentation and FAQs, apply for an account on **IRC**